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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m., and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal and ever-blessed God, the Alpha and Omega, thank You for the gift of this day. Give us the wisdom to use it to enrich lives by service to others. Use our lawmakers to continue Your momentum in our world, enabling them to become salt and light to this generation.

Lord, as our Senators strive to be productive members of the family of humanity, empower them to do Your will. Supply their needs out of the bounty of Your celestial riches. If they fall, may they fall forward as they trust You to remain the author and finisher of their faith.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ROSEN). The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. CANTWELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

INVESTING IN A NEW VISION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND SURFACE TRANSPORTATION IN AMERICA ACT—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 3684, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3684) to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3684

Ms. CANTWELL. Madam President, many States in the United States need infrastructure investment, but I would put the State of Washington high on the list of States that desperately need infrastructure investment.

We have been blessed with a growing economy and a big trade economy based on the Pacific rim and the actions of the Pacific rim. So we need to keep moving products. We need to keep moving services, and we need infrastructure investment to do so.

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank the work done by the Commerce Committee and those who worked on the Infrastructure Investment Act, specifically: Kara Fischer, Michael Davisson, Joanie Lofgren, Zeb Schorr, Ronce Almond, Alex Simpson, G.G. Slais, Nicole Teutschel, Jennifer Quan, Matthew Bobbink, Jami Burgess, David Martin, Amit Ronen, Stacy Baird, Devon Helfrich, Patrick Eckroth,

Naseem Mehyar, Hannah Albert, Eric Vryheid, Elle Wibisino, John Branscome, Shawn Bone, Brian McDermott, Mary Claire York, Jared Bomberg, Shannon Smith, John Beezer, Noam Kanter, Jordan Blue, Tiffany George, Lucy Koch, Hunter Hudspeth Blackburn, Kelly Ryan, Dave Stewart, Melissa Porter, and David Strickland.

These are some of the individuals who were involved in putting together the commerce piece of this underlying bill. About 20 percent of the underlying bill was the focus of the Commerce Committee and its jurisdiction.

I want to thank Ranking Member WICKER and his staff for the hard work to pull off what was the bipartisan bill that came to the Senate floor as part of this package.

Our legislation, I think, is a historic investment to rebuild our transportation infrastructure, including investments in things like megaprojects, basically helping to eliminate our problems at grade crossings, improve our freight network, improve our environment by removing culverts, and helping Amtrak better serve the United States of America.

All these were important investments, but we should look at the firsts. First, we are authorizing for the first time megaprojects. Megaprojects often take up so much of our budget in our States and federally they never get funded, but that doesn't mean they aren't critical to the United States.

In the Northeast Corridor, we certainly have megaprojects. In the Pacific Northwest, we have megaprojects that would be critical, like the Columbia River Crossing between Vancouver and Portland, or the Highway 2 trestle in Everett. These projects deserve the attention of the Nation and, with this first-time authorization, will get so.

The bill also puts a historic investment in freight and in Amtrak. As I mentioned, the economy of a global nature is demanding that we be able to

• This “buller” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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